

## **Process for Developing the Coral Reef Fishery Management Local Action Strategy**

Initial steps in this process included developing a steering committee and holding local stakeholder meetings to establish communication with interested parties and solicit input from the coral reef fishery stakeholders. The steering committee members for this process were from NOAA Fisheries Pacific Islands Regional Office and the Pacific Islands Science Center, Hawaii's DAR, Hawaii SeaGrant College Program, the University of Hawaii and the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

In an effort to move this process forward, the steering committee developed a number of focus areas, which would help guide the development of the coral reef fishery management local action strategy. These focus areas were: 1) Effective enforcement of current fishery regulations, 2) Improvement in data acquisition, compilation, and rectification, 3) Assessment of current fishery monitoring regime, 4) Assess the current status of key fish species utilizing a comprehensive stock assessment methods and emphasizing an ecosystem approach, 5) Conduct permanent biological/ecological research to support #4, 6) Improve communication and dissemination of information to stakeholders and decision makers, 7) Assess socioeconomic impacts of any proposed management changes, 8) Overall program implementation and coordination, and 9) Assess current and future management regimes.

*Step 1: Coral Reef Fisheries Stakeholder Meetings* - Six public planning meetings were held throughout the state of Hawaii to engage stakeholders (fishermen, state, federal, university, NGO, and other interested parties). These meetings provided a forum to elicit information and ideas from the stakeholders that could be used in the development of both the local action strategy and the November coral reef fishery management workshop (mentioned below in Step 3). These meetings were facilitated by an independent contractor and were held on Hawaii, Kauai, Maui, and Oahu.

A series of questions were asked at the local meetings and given out in a questionnaire in order to help focus the discussion and stakeholder input on coral reef fishery management issues. These questions were: 1) What are your general impressions on the conditions of coral reef fishery resources in the Main Hawaiian Islands? 2) If you were responsible for coral reef fishery management in Hawaii what sort of management measures would you suggest to (better manage the fishery) ensure the long-term sustainability of the resource? 3) What information needs to be collected to assist managers in their decision making process? 4) What do you see as the most important (most critical) issue in regards to managing Hawaii's coral reef fisheries? 5) What specific outcomes should we set as goals for management? 6) Which management measures do you think are working? Which ones are not working? 7) What role should fishers play in coral reef fisheries management?

Objectives:

- Evaluate how the public sees current coral reef fishery management efforts and the condition of the resources throughout the state.
- Discuss options for coral reef fishery management (including current regimes, efforts under utilized, and new options)
- Identify priority actions that can help increase the effectiveness of coral reef fishery management.

*Step 2: Development of Draft LAS* - Information from the public meetings and any returned questionnaires were combined in order to determine the recurring themes and to highlight exceptional ideas. This information was used to fill in priority actions for both the draft of the local action strategy for fishery management and as items for the agenda for the November workshop (Step 3). The combined information from all the meetings was sent to the stakeholders that attended the public meetings along with information about the Nov. workshop (Step 3).

Objectives:

- Transform the ideas and information from the public hearing into usable projects.
- Prioritize the projects and determine how these projects can support the objectives of the coral reef fishery management plan.
- Review current and past fishery information and identify any gaps in management plan.
- Identify ways to enhance participation of the coral reef fishery community (both commercial and recreational) in up-coming workshop.

*Step 3: Coral reef Fishery Management Workshop* - A 2-day workshop was held to discuss Hawaii coral reef fishery management, the draft local action strategy, and other issues related to coral reef fishery management. The workshop was held on Nov. 6 & 7 at Ho'olua Golf Course. Agenda items included discussing the draft Coral Reef Fishery Management Local Action Strategy along with other key focus areas that were of concern to the managers and stakeholders. This forum provided a platform to begin to finalize the local action strategy.

Objectives:

- Introduce draft coral reef fishery management plan to the public and fine-tune the objectives and projects through more in depth discussion of some of the key issues and needs.
- Identify ways in which the fisheries community can assist in the management and research activities that are defined in the draft plan.

*Step 4:* Finalize local action strategy on coral reef fishery management and get approval from all relevant parties.

Actions:

- Define measurable indicators and outcomes for each of the projects and objectives.
- Identify funding sources that are required for unfounded activities and draft a strategy to initiate new projects.
- Establish a monitoring and evaluation program for this plan.

## **Funding**

NOAA is providing funds for the coral reef fishery management workshop and public hearings to support the development of this local action strategy. Local partners, DLNR-DAR and NOAA, will contribute staff and funding as available to aid in the continued development of this plan.

NOAA is expected to provide some additional funds to assist in the implementation of this plan, but the majority of the funds are expected to come from existing budgets of participating agencies, except where grant or other funds can be secured.